

FREE-RESPONSE ESSAY RUBRIC/GRADE SHEET

AP GRADE: CLASS GRADE:

Superior Essay: AP Score of 8-9

- ____ Superior thesis
- ____ Extremely well-organized essay
- ____ Addresses all areas of the prompt evenly
- ____ Excellent use of analysis to support thesis and main ideas.
- ____ Substantial use of evidence throughout
- ____ Extremely well-written essay
- ____ Generally error free (need not be perfect)

Strong Essay: AP Score of 6-7

- ____ Strong thesis (contains general analysis)
- ____ Well-organized essay
- ____ Addresses all areas of the prompt; may lack some balance between major areas
- ____ Strong analysis in most areas; needs more
- ____ Strong use of evidence; may lack balance
- ____ Well-written essay
- ____ May contain minor errors

Adequate Essay: AP Score of 5

- ____ Clear thesis (needs more analysis)
- ____ Thesis a bit vague or muddy

- ____ Fairly well-organized essay
- ____ Addresses all areas of the prompt but essay may lack balance.
- ____ Contains some analysis; more needed
- ____ Contains some evidence; more needed
- ____ Essay deviates at times from thesis
- ____ May contain significant historical errors
- ____ Some facts are irrelevant to time period

Fair Essay: AP Score of 2-4

- ____ Undeveloped thesis (simple thesis)
- ____ Does not establish purpose of the essay.
- ____ Thesis does not fully address question
- ____ Weak organization
- ____ Does not address one or more aspects of the question: _____
- ____ Lacks analysis of key issues
- ____ Lacks evidence to support main ideas.
- ____ Contains major historical errors
- ____ Much information irrelevant to question.
- ____ Essay is somewhat incomplete (too short)

Inadequate Essay: AP Score of 1

- ____ No thesis or poor thesis
- ____ Incorrect or incomplete essay
- ____ Facts not specific, accurate & relevant.
- ____ Poor analysis of key issues

“0” Essay: Did not do the question

___ Writes on topic completely different from the prompt

___ Little to no effort shown in preparation for essay

General Comments:

Thesis/intro: complex-split ___; complex-simple ___; split-simple ___; simple ___; too much info ___

___ Introduction contains vague or “wasted” sentences

___ Essay contains vague statements or generalizations not supported by facts.

___ Strong conclusion ___ Weak conclusion ___ No Conclusion

___ Strong topic sentences ___ Improve topic sentences ___ Good linking sentences

___ Don’t use “I” statements ___ Don’t use “I,” “our,” “we,” “us,” “you,” etc.

___ Don’t connect issues to “today” (unless asked) ___ Don’t use “flowery” or colloquial style

___ Poor spelling and grammar ___ Poor penmanship: essay difficult to read

THESIS TYPES:

1. Simple thesis: “The Civil War was a revolution in American society.” (Rating: poor)

- Thesis is far too simplistic. It contains no partition or analysis.

2. Complex-simple thesis: “In some respects, Americans experienced profound changes during the war. After the war, it was clear that society had also been changed dramatically in a number of important areas.” (Rating: fair)

- The analytical aspect of the thesis is promising. However, no partition is established. The thesis does not establish how American society was changed by the war.

3. Simple-split thesis: "The Civil War was a revolution in America politically, socially, and constitutionally." (Rating: fair)

- Thesis provides a partition: politics, society, and the Constitution.
- Thesis lacks an explanation or general analysis in each of the three areas in the partition.
- Note: This thesis would be a "simple thesis" if the question already contained a partition.

4. Complex-split thesis: "Politically, the war established the supremacy of the Republican party in national politics for much of the next fifty years. Socially, the war saw significant gains in African American rights. And constitutionally, the war established the supremacy of the federal government over the states. Thus, the Civil War did in fact represent a political, social and constitutional revolution in America." (Rating: superior)